

The **Berean Searchlight**

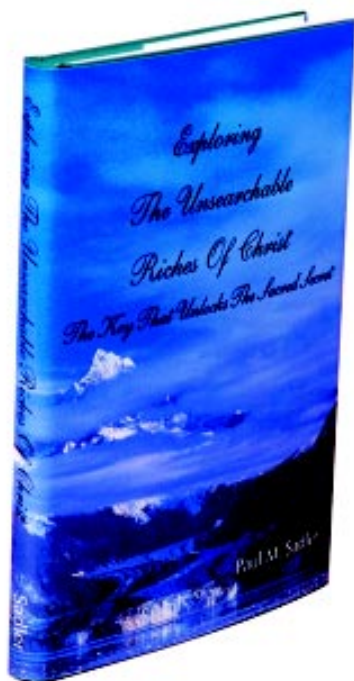
Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

March 1999



SPRING BOOK SPECIAL

Exploring the Unsearchable Riches of Christ



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From the Editor to You:



Dearly Beloved,

Throughout the year we receive repeated requests to post our speaking itinerary far enough in advance so the brethren can schedule their travel plans to coincide with our meetings. The following is your Editor's 1999 *conference* calendar:

March 19-21—*Oshkosh Bible Conference*, Oshkosh, WI

March 26-28—*Northeast Bible Conference*, Ashtabula, OH

April 10-11—*Smoky Mountain Bible Conference*, Pigeon Forge, TN

April 12-13—*Nashville Bible Conference*, Goodlettsville, TN

April 24—*Michigan City Regional Meetings*, Michigan City, IN

May 28-30—*Smoky Mountain Grace Conference*, Hendersonville, NC

June 19-24—*Berean Bible Fellowship Conference*, Cedar Lake, IN

July 18—*Bitely Community Church*, Bitely, MI

July 25—*Grace Bible Church*, Midland, MI

August 6-8—*London Regional Meetings*, London, Ontario, Canada

September 18-22—*Altoona Bible Church Fall Conference*, Altoona, PA

October 7-8—*Berean Bible Fellowship Fall Conference*, Rapid City, SD

October 30-Nov. 1—*Orlando Fall Bible Conference*, Orlando, FL

November 11—*Grace Bible Church*, Evansville, IN

In some cases your Editor will be sharing the platform with other guest speakers. For additional information regarding phone numbers, accommodations, directions, times of services and a list of other speakers, please visit our Internet Site: <www.bereanbiblesociety.org>. The pages of the *Berean Searchlight* will also provide advance notification of upcoming conferences (See pages 22,23).

We are currently, by God's grace, accepting invitations for next year (March 15th thru November 15th). In fact, three speaking engagements have already been confirmed. So if you would like the *Berean Bible Society* to hold special meetings in your area, we will need to hear from you as soon as possible. May God richly bless the preaching of the gospel to the praise of His glory in Christ Jesus.

Paul M. Sadler
President

From West Virginia:

"I can think of no better way to serve our Lord than through your publications explaining the *gospel of grace*. I believe the *Grace Movement* as a whole, and the *BBS* in particular, is to Protestantism what Luther was to Roman Catholicism. Protestant denominationalism is now mired down in tradition, having made the same fundamental mistake that its predecessor did. Thank you for helping us to see what the true gospel is."

From Missouri:

"I surely would not want to be without this *Searchlight*. I read and re-read it."

From Ohio:

"May God bless. I thank you for your faithfulness in sending me that wonderful booklet, the *Berean Searchlight*."

From Wisconsin:

"Use this to help teach the gospel of grace and the mystery to a world of people, lost and saved, that need to hear. May God use *BBS* to save many and help our fellow Christians grow in Christ." (May God give us strength to uphold our God-given responsibility to preach the gospel. As we know, salvation is of the Lord. Ed.)

From Florida:

"Please send me 3 copies of *The Institution of Marriage*. Thank you for putting these excellent articles into booklet form. I'm still rejoicing in God's marvelous provision of grace. I first learned of the *Searchlight* and the *Berean Bible Society* in 1983. Thank you, thank you one and all for your faithfulness to His Word, rightly divided."

From Pennsylvania:

"We enjoy the *Berean Searchlight* and have all of Brother Stam's writings, but we have never had a clear understanding of the history of the *Grace Movement*. Please send me a copy of the 50th Anniversary historical record. *BBI* and *BBS* are always in our prayers."

From Minnesota:

"Over a period of many years, I myself and various members of my family have profited enormously from your publications, especially the writings of C. R. Stam, his books, pamphlets, and *Searchlight* magazine. I know of no other literature its equal in scholarship and persuasiveness."

From Florida:

"Just want to thank you for your faithfulness to the Lord and to *Berean Bible Society*. You have a great work. I'm so glad Pastor Stam found someone like you to *carry the colors*. We'll be praying for you as you carry the message of grace and the great responsibility that goes with the task."

From Indiana:

"Thank you for your trusting the Lord in ministering through the *Searchlight*. May the Lord bless you in your work."

From Alaska:

"We thank God often for using the *Berean* organization in our lives. Here in our small town in southeast Alaska, only our mother and one other couple embrace Paul's gospel. God bless you all in 1999." (God often does His greatest work among the "little flocks." Remember, only eight souls carried the Word of God into the new world following the flood in the days of Noah. Ed.)

From Pennsylvania:

"How exciting it was to get your letter about the booklet on marriage. I anxiously awaited the *Searchlight* every month that the series was running in it (not that I don't look forward to it every month). I have family members who I am going to be giving copies of the booklet to because they are attempting to keep marriages going without the benefit of God's Word. I'm hoping these will make a real difference. Please send me 6 copies. Our prayers and thoughts are with you as you strive to spread the truths of God's Word, rightly divided."

From Wisconsin:

“We thank Him for revealing the *mystery* of Paul’s gospel to us and the peace it affords in these last days before the Rapture. I could never comprehend II Thessalonians 2:11 until now. It seems the whole world believes the lie already. I am quoting Pastor O’Hair a lot lately. He always used to say ‘people nowadays are educated beyond their intelligence.’ That was 50 years ago. We pray for you all as you labor faithfully in Germantown.” (Have you noticed that Paul’s gospel gives you a greater sense of stability in your Christian life? Ed.)

From Nebraska:

“I would appreciate it if you could start sending the person named above the *Berean Searchlight*. This man, my father, is starting to read the Bible in his later years and I have given him the booklet tape series, which he has found interesting. Would you please send the following books to him also.”

From Iowa:

“Enclosed find \$.... to use as you need. Our prayer is that God will supply your needs and that many will hear and be saved.”

From Arizona:

“I have a sincere Christian brother who still lives under the law or at least believes in tongues and signs and can’t see the different program of grace we live in, resulting from a failure to *rightly divide the Word of truth*. I discovered this truth from *BBS* back in 1992 and it has been a blessing ever since. It clears all confusion and removes all condemnation. I wish to order the book, *Exploring the Unsearchable Riches of Christ* to give to this brother in the hope that he will find this truth for himself.” (In the meantime, we’ll be praying that the Lord will open the eyes of his understanding. Ed.)

From Washington:

“Your *Searchlight* as well as your message is a main learning source for me. *Paul the Boaster* is a marvelous eye opener and I pray many will be enlightened through it. May God continue His great blessings in giving the world His Word, rightly divided, through you. It is possible that 1999 is the year of Christ’s appearing in Glory for us. Amen, come Lord Jesus.”

From Florida:

“I would like to thank everyone at the *Berean Bible Society* for sharing God’s Word with me. I’ve been receiving the *Searchlight* for 5 years and I really look forward to getting my issue every month. I know for sure that all those who help in putting the *Searchlight* together are dedicated to the grace of God. I’ve been studying the Word for 8 years while in prison, but not until I was introduced to the *BBS* did I really understand how to rightly divide God’s Word. I read my copy of *Two Minutes With the Bible* every night. Don’t ever let up on the work He has bestowed upon y’all at *BBS*.”

From Ohio:

“We are greatly encouraged to hear of your progress there at the *Bible Institute*. May the year 1999 be a year of much blessing there at the ministry.” (Lord willing, this year will give birth to the first graduating class at the *Berean Bible Institute*. Ed.)

From California:

“Thank you for the *Berean Searchlight* and for your ministry on the *Internet*. May you reach many multitudes of people through 1999 and beyond. I am on a limited, fixed income but enclosed is a little offering to help with your expenses. As the Lord provides, I hope to send contributions throughout 1999. May the Lord of Lords richly bless you.”

“These [Bereans] were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” —Acts 17:11

The Supernatural Sign Gifts of the Acts Period (Part III)

By Paul M. Sadler

THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

“To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy....”

—I Cor. 12:10

Among the supernatural sign gifts of the Acts period the *gift of prophecy* was perhaps the most prominent. While we have a tendency to associate the prophet with his role as a foreteller, that is, one that makes predictions about the future, his primary role was that of a *forthteller*.

With the invention of the printing press the Scriptures were made available to all that desired to have a copy. However, this was not the case in biblical times. Often, only a book of the Old Testament or a portion thereof was to be found in the synagogues. Furthermore, the so-called New Testament was still being written and compiled in Paul's day; therefore, God used the prophets as His divine *spokesmen* until the written revelation was completed.

Since the prophets were the mouthpiece of God, the work of *inspiration* permeated their very thought process. Thus, it can be safely said that those who possessed the “gift of prophecy” communicated the mind and will of God with *accuracy*. Of course, the unveiling of the Mystery gave repeated opportunities to further *enlighten* the saints in regard to the Pauline revelation. Little wonder the apostle labored to show the Corinthians, who gloried in tongues, the profitability of this gift.

“He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church” (I Cor. 14:3,4).

Those who were endowed with more than one supernatural sign gift were encouraged by the apostle to “covet earnestly the best gifts.” In other words, they were to exercise the gift that would prove to be the most beneficial to their particular calling.

For example, those having a burden for lost souls that were blessed with the *gifts* of prophecy and tongues would be best served to use the “gift of tongues” as they evangelized those of other languages. But it was far more profitable for those that labored in the local assembly who had these same gifts to use the “gift of prophecy” among the saints (I Cor. 14:22). Paul knew the *oral* instruction of God's Word would build up the assembly in the *newly* revealed doctrines of grace, challenging them to take a stand, and comforting them when confronted with persecution.

a. New Millennium Prophets

You may be sure as we approach the turn of the century that the self-appointed *prophets of doom* will be out in full force. The range of their prophecies will probably include the collapse of world financial markets, famine, the identity

of the Anti-Christ, nuclear holocaust, the day of Christ's return, the end of the world, etc. Since they will claim to speak authoritatively in the name of God many poor souls will find themselves paying homage to these unscrupulous prognosticators. But the true Berean need not be troubled, first, on the basis of a biblical *principle* and secondly, on the grounds of a clear-cut *dispensational* truth.

“But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die” (Deut. 18:20).

“Then said I [Jeremiah], Ah, Lord GOD! behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine; but I will give you assured peace in this place. Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name....

“Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land; By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed” (Jer. 14:13-15).

The *principle* is this: If a prophet spoke a word contrary to the known will of God or what he spoke did not come to pass, he was to be put to *death*. Of course, the purpose of this test was to put deceivers out of the land. The predictions of a true prophet of God were *one hundred percent* accurate *one hundred percent* of the time—no exceptions! Some years ago a national newspaper estimated that sixty percent of Jean Dixon's predictions came true. Of course, the editor felt this was a remarkable average. By

human standards it may be, but according to God's standard she would have been stoned to death as a false prophetess.

The prophets of old spoke with pinpoint *accuracy*. David, for example, 750 years before the coming of Christ, predicted His death by crucifixion. Interestingly, this form of capital punishment was unknown in the camp of Israel in those days. It is believed to have been an innovation of the Assyrians; however, there is little doubt that the Romans *perfected* it.

Prophecy: “For dogs [uncircumcised Gentiles] have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked [the Jewish leaders] have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet [crucifixion]. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They [Roman soldiers] part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture” (Psa. 22:16-18).

Fulfillment: “Then the soldiers of the governor [uncircumcised Gentiles] took Jesus into the common hall, and *gathered* unto Him the whole band of soldiers....And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand: and they bowed the knee before Him, and *mocked* Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon Him, and took the reed, and smote Him on the head” (Matt. 27:27-30).

“Likewise also the chief priests *mocking* Him, with the scribes and elders [Jewish leaders], said, He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him” (Matt. 27:41,42).

“And when they had *crucified* Him, they [Roman soldiers] parted His garments, casting *lots* upon them, what every man should take” (Mark 15:24).

With the completion of the written revelation of God the office of the prophet was *withdrawn*. Consequently, if we desire to know the will of God today or what the future holds, we must consult the Scriptures—they alone are the *final* authority.

Dispensationally, with the insertion of the parenthetical period of Grace, the predictions of the *prophetic program* came to an abrupt *halt*. Of course, prophetic teachers would have us believe that the predictions of the prophets are still being fulfilled as we speak. Surely, they say, we are living in the days of “wars and rumors of wars.” They boldly declare that Israel has taken possession of the Promised Land—a land flowing with milk and honey. These self-ordained prophets even seem to know the identity of the Anti-Christ. The old-timers used to have a saying when things weren’t exactly in line with the truth: “There’s something rotten in Denmark!”

Brethren, we might liken the events of prophecy to 250 links in a long steel chain. Once God initiates the prophetic chain of events every prophecy related to the “end times” will be fulfilled *sequentially*, simply because they are *inseparably linked*. Furthermore, these links are *forged* together by the

prophetic timetable of signs, times, and seasons according to the word of the prophet.

Today God is not dealing with the nations, *any nation!* Rather, he is saving individuals out of the nations (Rom. 10:12; 11:32). While Israel became a nation in 1948 and inhabits a small *fraction* of the land promised to Abraham, this is *not* in fulfillment of prophecy. She is there in her own strength, because the United Nations in cooperation with the United States made it possible. We do concur that God is *preserving* His people today, but this is a far cry from

saying the promises given to the patriarchs and prophets are being fulfilled.

In the coming day of the Lord, Israel will again hold a position of *supremacy* over the nations (Isa. 60:10-12; 61:6). In fact, the Gentiles will once again humbly *submit* themselves to

God’s people. “Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you” (Zech. 8:23).

According to prophecy, Israel won’t inherit the Promised Land in its entirety until she is *regathered* at the beginning of the Millennium. Incidentally, few seem to realize that this will be a *massive* piece of real estate. The northern border will extend to Syria, the

“...if we desire to know the will of God today or what the future holds, we must consult the Scriptures—they alone are the *final* authority.”

southern to the Nile River in Egypt. The western border runs along the Mediterranean Sea, while the eastern allotment extends all the way to the River Euphrates (northeast) including mammoth tracts east of the river Jordan (Gen. 15:18 cf. Num. 34:1-12). If the Arab leaders of the region read this they're going to have a cardiac arrest!

b. Order in the Court

“Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints” (I Cor. 14:29-33).

There is an interesting statement made here by Paul that is frequently ignored. Namely, “the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.” Those who are supposedly “slain in the Spirit” today often appear as though they have lost contact with reality. It’s downright scary when they collapse to the floor while gyrating in an uncontrolled frenzy.

Clearly God is not the author of *confusion*. Thus, we are to understand that the supernatural sign gifts of the Acts period were performed in a *decent* and *orderly* fashion. At least this was God’s original plan. For example, when a prophet received a revelation from the Lord, the gift of prophecy was *subject* to the prophet’s normal train of thought. In short, if another was giving instruction, he was to sit quietly and wait his

turn before sharing what God had revealed to him. The Spirit of God never caused the prophet to act irrational, even though he may have had something essential to add. This rule of thumb also applied to the other miraculous gifts of the period (I Cor. 14:23).

Moreover God incorporated *checks and balances* into the process to insure the integrity of the sign gifts. In regard to the prophets, if one of their number was sharing with the church what God had imparted, the other prophets were to *judge*; that is, if the message was truly of God. This is also an indication that the prophets had the “gift of discerning of spirits,” enabling them to weed out the false prophets that came among the saints to deceive.

DISCERNING OF SPIRITS

“...To another discerning of spirits...” (I Cor. 12:10).

The *primary* function of this gift was to ascertain whether or not someone was *demon possessed*. In time past, those who were possessed with devils frequently hampered the proclamation of the kingdom hope. In fact, the battle intensified during the time Christ conducted His earthly ministry to Israel. Even during the transition from God’s earthly to His heavenly program demon possession was commonplace.

It has been said, “The preaching of Christ is the whip that flogs the devil. It is a thunderbolt, the sound of which makes all hell shake.” Thus as the gospel of grace spread into Europe, Satan pulled out all the stops, as it were, to *hinder* its advance. While the

stronghold of the kingdom gospel was always more prominent in the *east*, Satan apparently sensed that the gospel of the grace of God would hold a greater realm of influence in the *west*. As we know, Paul and Silas barely had time to introduce themselves before the archenemy of God launched his first attack. The record states:

“And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days.

“But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour” (Acts 16: 16-18).

Evil spirits normally employ one of two methods to hinder the proclamation of the gospel—alliance or antagonism. Here they chose to antagonize. This particular evil spirit sought to *mock* the apostle. “These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation.” Paul knew this wasn’t a form of free advertisement, but a sinister plot to ridicule the Cross. Unwilling to allow this type of attack to continue, the apostle commanded the evil spirit to come out of her in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

While many flippantly claim they can exorcise demons today,

they fail to understand that at least *three* supernatural sign gifts were required before this could be accomplished. Paul called upon the “gift of discerning of spirits” to peer into the damsel’s heart to determine if her state of mind was being controlled by an evil spirit or some sort of malady. He then had to ascertain through the “gift of knowledge” whether or not it was God’s will for this demon to be expelled at that time and place. Finally, the apostle used the “gift of exorcism (miracles)” to drive out this emissary of Satan (Acts 19:11-12). Interestingly, he did so in the

power and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul understood that the battle is the Lord’s!

Today, the battleground has shifted from the earthly realm to the heavenly. Consequently, demon possession is uncommon, if not rare. Since the Holy Spirit indwells

the believer, it is *impossible* for him to be possessed; however, the battle may become so intense that he may be *troubled* at times by the powers of darkness. Although many allege to be an authority on multiple personalities, the truth is only God knows if the neurotic conduct of someone is due to physical abnormalities, emotional problems or demon possession. Thus, with the *cessation* of the sign gifts the primary weapon of our warfare against this type of attack today is *prayer* (Rom. 8:26,27; Eph. 6:10-18).

To be continued!



QUESTION BOX

“What is your position on chastisement? Do you feel the Lord chastens believers today?”

We believe *chastisement* is a transdispensational truth. For example, David was a mighty man of war; consequently, God charged his son, Solomon, with the task of building the temple. Although the house of David had found favor in the eyes of God, the Lord added: “I will be his [Solomon’s] father, and he shall be My son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men” (II Sam. 7:14).

In the Book of Hebrews we learn, *“For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?”* (Heb. 12:6,7). Here again the *principle* is set forth. Just as a father chastens his son for unruly behavior to keep him out of harm’s way, so God the Father chastens those He loves. This may take on many forms: The Lord can rebuke us through His Word, He may use the disciplinary actions of men, and some have even been turned over to Satan. One thing is certain, when the Lord gets your attention—*it’s undivided!*

Perhaps if we ask three timely questions here it will help shed some additional light upon the matter: Is God our *Father* today? Indeed! (See Eph. 1:2,3). Are we the *sons of God*, as members of the Body of Christ? Yes! (See Gal. 4:6,7). Does God *love* us? By all means! (See Rom. 8:35-39). I rest my case.

Of course, the chastening hand of the Lord can be *avoided* by merely heeding Titus 2:12, where we learn the grace of God *teaches* us that, “denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.” So then, we thus conclude that God does indeed chasten those He loves today. For examples of chastisement during the dispensation of Grace, please see: I Corinthians 5:1-7; 11:31,32; II Corinthians 6:9; I Timothy 1:18-20.

—Pastor Sadler



“Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man” (Col. 4:4,5).

Christ Crucified

Unto the Jews a Stumblingblock Unto the Greeks Foolishness

By Cornelius R. Stam


The world will gladly listen to preaching about “the baby Jesus,” or “the carpenter of Nazareth,” or “the man of Galilee.” They will gladly listen to the story of His life, but bring them to the Cross and they back away.

The preaching of the Cross embarrasses the Jew. To him Christ crucified is a constant Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offence. He complains with his fathers, “Ye intend to bring this man’s blood upon us” (Acts 5:28).

To the Gentiles the preaching of the Cross is foolishness. They laugh and say, “He could not save

Himself! How can He save others? He could not save them by His life! How can He save them by His death?”

Thank God, what seems so foolish and illogical to them is to us the only reasonable plan of salvation. We are thrilled and proud of Him; we love and worship Him, because He did not save Himself, so that He might save us, for “CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS” (I Cor. 15:3).

Yes, “*The preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God*” (I Cor. 1:18). 

What Really Matters

By Cornelius R. Stam

Who would ever have thought that a mouse could force a modern airline to transfer 42 passengers from one big jet airliner to another and give the pilot and crew a sixteen-hour vacation?

Well, it happened in London some years ago. One of the “between-flight” cleaners spotted a mouse on the New York-bound jet and reported it to his superiors, with the result that the 42 passengers were transferred to a plane leaving some hours later.

The British Overseas Airways Corporation *said* that they were doing this to de-infest and fumigate

the plane. But—*all this*: de-infest and fumigate the giant plane because of one little mouse? or even a few little mice?

Well, maybe, but do you know what I think? I think they foresaw panic aboard if some of the passengers should see that little mouse while they were in flight. Women don’t exactly like mice and it wouldn’t be good to have them standing up on seats or rushing for exits at 30,000 feet altitude!


Isn’t it odd! They say a little mouse can scare a big elephant, and it isn’t too different with the human race. Comparatively little things tend to frighten us, while

too often we hardly notice great dangers.

The fact that *“it is appointed unto men once to die,”* and that this can happen when least expected; the fact that after this life there will be no further opportunity to prepare for eternity; the fact that a just and holy God *must* judge sin (See Heb. 9:27): these are the really important matters that so many people overlook in their mad scramble to enjoy life.

Let's get down to earth and be sensible and face the question our Lord asked in Matthew 16:26:

“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” Let's stop living for this life as if it were never to end and for the next as if it were never to begin.

The Lord Jesus Christ died on Calvary to pay the penalty for our sins (I Cor. 15:3) so that we might be saved and sure of heaven. Why not trust in Him and receive *“redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace”* (Eph. 1:7). 

The Value of One Individual Person

By Cornelius R. Stam

Just imagine! It had been three weeks since a big Air Force plane had disappeared over the Pacific with a crew of eight and a Navy enlisted man.

Now, in that general vicinity, the pilot of an Air Force cargo plane reported sighting a raft with one man standing up in it, waving for help.

Almost immediately the Air Force dispatched sixteen planes to the area and called upon all ships nearby to help, in the hope of finding this one man.

Again and again we have witnessed the almost unlimited effort and expense that men will go to to rescue even one of their fellowmen from death. This is as it should be, for it is only in this life that we can prepare for eternity and it is important that each of us should have the greatest possible opportunity to prepare, in case through carelessness we

may have put this important matter off.


It was with eternity in mind that the Lord Jesus Christ paid the greatest possible price to save men from judgment to come, and what the Bible calls *“the second death.”*

“Christ also hath once suffered for sins,” says I Peter 3:18, *“the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.”* Titus 2:14 says that *“He gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity.”* I Peter 2:24 declares that He *“bore our sins in His own body on the tree,”* and in Galatians 2:20 St. Paul exclaims: *“He loved me and gave Himself for me.”*

After three weeks alone on the ocean, the man referred to above was keenly conscious of his need. He stood up and waved frantically, in the hope that someone on the plane above might see him and bring help. Some people, adrift in

this world of sin and trouble, go on for many, many years before they become aware of their need—or at least, before they will acknowledge it. But not until we *do* acknowledge our sin and our need, can we expect help or salvation. “Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinner*s” (I Tim. 1:15). Good people do not need a Savior, but who is really *good*? Romans 3:23

says that “*all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,*” and our consciences bear witness. But let us rejoice and trust Him for salvation.

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” (I Cor. 15:3,4). 

Why God’s Children Suffer

By Cornelius R. Stam

Contrary to common belief, the Bible does not teach that all men are the children of God. Our Lord said to the religious leaders of His day: “*Ye are of your father the devil*” (John 8:44), but to the Christian believers at Galatia St. Paul wrote: “*Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus*” (Gal. 3:26).

As the children of Adam, it is not strange that we should have to bear suffering, for sorrow, sickness and death entered the world through sin (Rom. 5:12). But some people wonder why God’s children, whose greatest desire is to please Him, should have to suffer along with others.

There are several reasons for this. In the case of Job, God allowed His servant to suffer to prove to Satan that Job did not live a godly life for personal gain—and Job was richly rewarded later for all he had borne.


Further, God’s people could not be of much spiritual help to others if they were exempt from the sufferings which others have to bear. In such a case the unsaved

would say: “Yes, you can talk! You don’t know what it is like to suffer disappointments, sickness and pain, as we do.”

Then too, it must be remembered that even the most godly saint is not perfect and must at times be disciplined, “*for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth*” (Heb. 12:6). This is done for our good, to keep us from sin and its consequences.

Finally, suffering and adversity tend to make God’s children pray more and lean harder on Him, and herein lies their spiritual strength and blessing. St. Paul said: “*I take pleasure in infirmities...for when I am weak, then am I strong*” (II Cor. 12:10).

But there is a great twofold advantage which the suffering Christian has over others. First, his sufferings are only temporary and, second, they earn eternal glory for him.

“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (II Cor. 4:17). 

What Difference Does it Make? (Cont'd)

By David M. Havard

EVANGELISM

Proper Motivation

Understanding Paul's gospel not only gives us the proper evangelistic message, it also provides us the proper motivation for sharing the gospel of the grace of God. We are not to be motivated by guilt. Rather, the love of Christ should compel us just as it did the Apostle Paul (II Cor. 5:14).

The end does not justify means. This is especially true when it comes to interpreting and applying the Scriptures. While they may mean well, far too many Bible teachers revert to kingdom Scriptures when trying to motivate us to share our faith.

An Old Testament passage commonly used to this end is Ezekiel 3:17-21. After this passage is read, we are then exhorted that we are the designated "watchmen" of our generation and that if someone who we failed to witness to dies and goes to hell, "his blood will be upon our head." Should we take advantage of every opportunity to share the good news of salvation? Most certainly! But if we don't take advantage of the opportunity, will that person's blood be on our head? Absolutely not. However, we should be aware that while we will not be guilty of the person's blood, we ourselves will suffer loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

What difference does this make? It can make a big difference in our motive and approach to evangelism. If we share the gospel with

others because we are motivated by guilt or fear our attitude will be evident to them. Our motive for evangelism should be the love of Christ, not our own self-interest. And believe me, people can tell the difference.

Another verse used is Luke 14:23 wherein we are told to go out into the highways and byways and "compel" them to come in. Again, while it is true that we should lovingly urge those to whom we witness to accept Christ, there is no place for arm-twisting or being ungracious in our approach.

Probably the most frequently misapplied passage as related to evangelism is Matthew 28:19-20. Most conservative Christians have been taught that this is the "Great Commission." Most people fail to see the 100% Jewish context of these verses. The command to "teach all nations" does not refer to teaching them the gospel of the grace of God; rather, what they are to go out teaching is the gospel of the kingdom. The Jews were always intended by God to be the channel of salvation for the Gentiles. (That Gentiles could be saved is not the gospel of the mystery. The aspect of Gentile salvation that was not revealed until the Apostle Paul is that Gentiles could be saved *apart* from Israel). The fact of the kingdom gospel is further emphasized in that they are to be "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." You never find water baptism to be a part of the

gospel of the grace of God. As a matter of fact, Paul said just the opposite in I Corinthians 1:17 where he states, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."

Another phrase within this text that shows its Jewish/kingdom nature is "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." What did Christ command His disciples? He taught them to keep the law: "Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to His disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: **All** therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, **that observe and do**; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not" (Matt. 23:1-3).

It is only by reading Paul's gospel into the kingdom program that we can try to apply the so-called "Great Commission" to us today.

But even as we say that the "Great Commission" is not for us today, we also want to point out just as quickly that this does not mean that we do not believe in the need for evangelism. Quite the contrary! We have what has been called the "Greater Commission!"

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, Who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are

ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (II Cor 5:17-20).

We are sent out not as someone who testifies under compulsion, fear, or guilt. Rather, we are sent out as joyful ambassadors on behalf of our God! We do not go to the world with a message of judgment, but with one of reconciliation. This we can do with joy and love on behalf of those to whom we are sent.

What motivates us to testify of the gospel of the grace of God is love, not guilt or fear. We share our faith because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts and not out of self-interest. We witness for their benefit, not ours. The lost world around us can tell what motivates us, and as one has said, "The world doesn't care what you know until they know that you care."

CHRISTIAN WALK

Not only does understanding the gospel of the grace of God provide a proper motive for us to share our faith, it also gives us the proper motive and means to live the Christian life effectively.

Proper Method

By what method or means are we enabled to live a proper Christian life? The fact that a proper walk is desired by God is evidenced by the many times in Paul's epistles that we are exhorted to "walk worthy" or to practically live up to what God has called us to be in Christ. In Ephesians 4:1 Paul beseeches us that we would "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith

ye are called” (Eph 4:1). (See also Rom.6:4; Eph. 2:10; 5:8; Col. 1:10; 2:6; 4:5; I Thes. 2:12; 4:1).

But while we may readily admit the need to live in such a way that honors Christ, we also ask “How?” What is the means to living what some call a “victorious Christian life”?

Some would have us believe that the way to walk worthy is to “speak the word of faith” and to command Satan to leave us alone. Any lapse or failure to achieve victory is blamed on us. “You didn’t have enough faith” we are told. Unfortunately, those who try to live out this misapplied teaching find themselves frustrated because it simply does not work in this present evil age. In this age, we are not exhorted to bind or rebuke Satan, but to put on the whole armor of God so that we can stand against him:

“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand” (Eph 6:11-13).

THIS is the secret to a dynamic Christian life! Not in “speaking the word of faith” or other such New Age and in some cases, occultic practices! There is no magic

formula, no quick and easy shortcut to Christian maturity and victory. Maturity comes only as we read and submit to God’s Word in our life. Victory comes only by the daily sacrifice and submission of ourselves to God (Rom. 12:1-2).

Proper Motivation

The gospel of the grace of God also gives us the proper motivation for living righteously before God. Our primary motivation to live as we should is the overwhelming love of God that is poured out upon us (Rom. 5:5; II Cor. 5:14; Gal. 5:6; Eph. 2:4; 3:19). It is this love that is supposed to motivate us to in turn love God and others (Eph. 5:2).

The reason that we are separated from the world and unto God is not because of some legalistic mindset, but because of our love for others. Paul says that he is careful to not offend

the unsaved (Jews or Gentiles) or the saved (the church of God) and that he doesn’t seek his own profit, “but the profit of many, that they may be saved” (I Cor. 10:32-33).

This is why we refrain from certain activities. Not because we think we are more pious or holy than others, but to make sure that we do not place a stumbling block in front of them (i.e., trip them up) spiritually.

“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

“Maturity comes only as we read and submit to God’s Word in our life.”

For even Christ pleased not Himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell on Me” (Rom. 15:1-3).

And:

“But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak... And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ” (I Cor. 8:9,11,12).

We see that the love and grace of God toward us and our love for others for the sake of the gospel should constrain us to live righteously and holy in this present evil age. Our motivation should not be what pleases us, but that which leads to the edification and salvation of others.

Another seldom mentioned aspect of the dispensation of Grace that should motivate us to walk as we should is the Judgment Seat of Christ. As stewards we will be required to give an account before God as to how we have administered the gospel that He has entrusted to us (Rom. 14:12; I Cor. 4:2; II Cor. 5:10).

We do not have to ever worry about eternal damnation or judgment for sin because that was paid for by the blood of Christ and we are secure in Him (Rom. 8:31-34; Col. 2:10). However, there will be an accounting. Just as God’s love compels us to serve Him (as that of a son who wants to please his earthly father), fear of His displeasure likewise motivates us as well. Just as an earthly son does not want to experience the displeasure of his father, so we should also

be concerned about our Father’s displeasure at the Bema Seat of Christ.


But we must remember that displeasure does not equal damnation or loss of sonship. My son may do something that displeases me, but that will never change the fact that he is my son and heir. While there is nothing that can change the established fact that we are sons of God and heirs with Christ, this does not mean that our Father cannot be displeased with us, either here or at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

This is why Paul, speaking of the children of Israel, writes in I Corinthians 10:5, “But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.” And he goes on to say, “Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted” (I Cor. 10:6). Paul is saying that just as God was not well pleased with many (not a few) of the Israelites, He is often not pleased with the Church, the Body of Christ today—in a practical sense. The Israelites were still His chosen people. We are still members of the Body of Christ. But being in the Body of Christ and knowing certain truths does not mean that we are living in such a way that is well-pleasing to God.

Some believers have unfortunately (and to their detriment) misinterpreted II Timothy 2:15. They mistakenly think that “study” simply means to academically study God’s Word and know the facts about God’s program for today as revealed through the Apostle Paul.

To “study” means to be diligent. Diligent unto what? Diligent unto the end of being “approved unto God.” Approved unto God refers to the Judgment Seat of Christ (II Cor. 5:10). What will be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ? Our knowledge of the Scriptures? Our knowledge of “right division”? No! What will be judged at the Bema Seat of Christ are “the things done in his [our] body, according to that he [we] hath done, whether

it be good or bad.” Notice that it is our works that will be judged—our walk, not our talk.

The last part of II Timothy 2:15 “rightly dividing the Word of truth” is the means to the end, not the end itself. “Rightly dividing the Word of truth” or knowing God’s program for today is what gives us the means or way to “be diligent” and live our life in such a way that we will be “approved unto God” at the Bema Seat of Christ. 

A BEACON OF HOPE

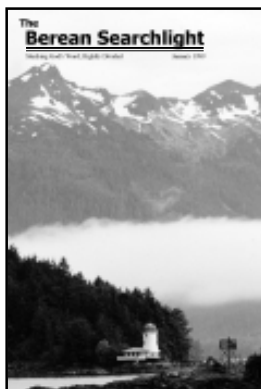


We recently received the following touching letter from our beloved Brother Gary Tension:

“The lighthouse pictures from Southeast Alaska on the December and January *Searchlight* publications have a special meaning for me I would like to share. In 1974, after receiving salvation under the teaching of our departed friend and brother Pastor Thurmond of the *Gardenville Community Church* in Affton, Missouri, I returned to Alaska with my family. With no ‘grace’ believers to fellowship and study with, our only source of the Word, rightly divided was Pastor Thurmond’s tapes and the ‘Berean Searchlights.’ Both were like beacons of ‘searchlights’ shining brightly through the fog each time they arrived, bringing forth the light of God’s Word in the only way it should ever be brought, rightly divided. We now live in North Carolina and will always be grateful for these rays of light sent us by God’s faithful servants.”

Your faithful support and prayers help us keep the light burning for stranded Grace believers like Gary and his family.

—Ed.



The Responsibilities of a Pastor's Wife

By Laurie Siegmann

The main responsibility of a wife, and a pastor's wife especially, is to be a "help meet." She is to honor her marriage by loving, honoring, respecting and being faithful to her husband.

A pastor's wife can fulfill her responsibilities by looking after her household and bringing her children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Fulfilling these duties will demonstrate a good example to the congregation.

In Proverbs chapter 31 we find the description of a godly woman. A virtuous woman, or pastor's wife, needs to be diligent and not lazy when it comes to caring for her home and the needs of her family. Verse 13 says that *"she worketh willingly with her hands."* Much time is occupied by the daily household duties necessary to make a home run smoothly. Her children are also given time and attention, as she trains and teaches them. If a woman is faithful in these areas, Proverbs 31:11 and 12 say that *"she will do him good and not evil all the days of her life,..."* and *"the heart of her husband will safely trust in her, so that he will have no need of spoil."*

A pastor's wife can also be a help to her husband by being hospitable to church members, visitors, or missionaries who visit, etc. *"She stretches out her hand to the poor; yea, she reaches forth her hands to the needy"* (Prov. 31:20).

A minister's wife should not necessarily be involved in a lot of

the church ministries, as a woman should *"not teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence"* (I Tim. 2:12). However, she may minister to children and other women.

She can help her husband by being observant, and privately and tactfully point out to him areas in his ministry that could be improved. This may include mannerisms, or comments that people have made to her, or things that she has quietly observed. Here she must be careful to follow Paul's admonition, *"Even so must their [the elders'] wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things"* (I Tim. 3:11). In this way, she will honor both her husband and the Lord, and will *"...give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully"* (I Tim. 5:14b).

When a pastor is counseling or visiting he may find it advisable to have his wife along, especially if it is a single woman, or one whose husband will not be present. His wife will be a help to him here by her presence and in her ability to see things from a woman's perspective. *"She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness"* (Prov. 31:26), a pastor's wife will especially need to remember this in counseling situations.

With the Lord's help, I pray that as my husband and I prepare to go into the ministry, that I will be found a faithful help meet.

1999 Oshkosh Bible Conference

Friday, March 19th through Sunday, March 21st

at

Grace Bible Church

549 Washington Avenue
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901

Theme:

"The Love of God"

Guest Speakers:

Dennis Kiszonas, Director of *Grace For Today Ministries*
Paul M. Sadler, President of the *Berean Bible Society*

Some lodging will be made available with church families on a first come basis. For brochures and additional information, please contact: Pastor Richard Ware at (920) 231-1499.

***May God richly bless these meetings
to the praise of His glory in Christ Jesus!***

Northeast Bible Conference

Friday, March 26th through Sunday, March 28th

at

Grace Gospel Church

5730 Adams Avenue
Ashtabula, Ohio 44004

Theme: *"Fighting the Good Fight of the Faith"*

Speaker: Pastor Paul M. Sadler

For times of services and additional information, please contact: Pastor David Adams at (440) 992-9008 or (440) 997-8191.

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Smoky Mountain Bible Conference

Sponsored by

Grace Bible Church

(Greater Knoxville Area)

Saturday, April 10th and Sunday, April 11th

Location:

Smoky Shadows Motel and Conference Center
4215 Parkway, Pigeon Forge, Tennessee

Theme:

"The Fundamentals of Dispensationalism"

Guest Speakers:

Paul M. Sadler, *Berean Bible Society*, Milwaukee, WI
Marv Wisemen, *Grace Bible Church*, Springfield, OH

For motel reservations, please call 1-800-282-2121. The church was able to secure a special conference rate (\$49.77 per night) for the weekend, so be sure to mention the *Grace Bible Church* when you phone. If you need additional information regarding the meetings, please contact: Pastor Kenny Clinton (423) 376-6266 or Mr. Dale Ward (423) 988-8955.

Nashville Bible Conference

to be held at

Goodlettsville, Tennessee

Pleasant Green Park Building
360 Pleasant Green Drive

Monday, April 12th and Tuesday, April 13th

Theme: *"The Turn of the Century
and Things to Come"*

Speaker: Pastor Paul M. Sadler

For additional information, please contact: Patsy Davenport (615) 851-7490 or Beth Person (615) 868-8338 or Donna Wolfe (615) 851-1932.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

HELP WANTED: As we prepare to celebrate our *Sixtieth Anniversary* next year, we need your assistance. Perhaps you have an interesting story or snapshot you would like to share with us for our upcoming anniversary edition. Of course, the possibilities are *endless*. It could be anything from a dinner experience with Pastor Stam to how you came in contact with our literature. If you plan to send photographs, may we request that only *copies* of the original be forwarded. Please send all replies here to **BBS—Attention: David Havard**. Thanks in advance!

A NEW GRACE BIBLE STUDY is now meeting every Sunday at the home of Brother Chester Van Orden in Pasadena, Maryland. These dear saints would be honored to have you join them in fellowship as they proclaim the riches of His grace. For additional information, please contact: Mr. Chester Van Orden, 1579 Colony Road, Pasadena, Maryland 21122 or phone: (410) 437-6020. Their e-mail address is: <graceforus@aol.com>.

FELLOWSHIP FILE: If your local assembly or Bible Study is in full agreement with the doctrinal position of the *Berean Bible Society*, we will be more than happy to add you to our “Fellowship File.” Simply send us all the applicable information along with a brief “statement of faith” and we’ll make sure that other grace believers are placed in contact with you. If you would like to establish a home Bible Study, you may want to consider being added to the list as well.

INTERNET: We are in the process of making a number of changes to our “Literature Corner.” It will soon include pictures and a brief description of each book that the *Berean Bible Society* publishes. This will be especially beneficial for newcomers that visit the site who are searching for the truth of Paul’s gospel. We are also researching the feasibility of placing audio messages (sermons) by Pastor Stam and your Editor that could be downloaded. Be sure to sign our *Guest Registry* when you visit us at: <www.bereanbiblesociety.org>.

*The picture of the lighthouse that appears on the front cover was taken by Mrs. Betty France. She is a freelance photographer who we had the privilege of meeting at a craft fair in Milwaukee. The lighthouse is located in *Germany*. We will be sharing more of Betty’s work with you in future issues of the *Berean Searchlight*.

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